

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Couper.*



THE RESCUED BIBLE.

THE EXILES OF SALZBURG.

CHAPTER XVII.

HANS now thought it advisable to prefer the claim of his wife and her two brothers to the Schüppelhof before the judicial court at Werffen. It was on the morning of the 24th of November, 1731, that, accompanied by the young brothers-in-law, he arrived at the miniature city of Werffen. Smoke, sparks flying upwards, and the glow of fire, first attracted their attention in the market-place. They drew near, and beheld with the greatest astonishment, in the midst of the square, an immense

quantity of books of all sorts piled up, which the deacon of Werffen, assisted by several of his servants, was, with holy zeal, endeavouring to kindle into flames. Already innumerable tongues of fire might be seen darting between the dry, parched leaves; its glowing breath had even consumed the thick leather bindings of the volumes. Mournfully but in silence the inhabitants surveyed at a distance the bloodless *auto da fé*, for which the deacon had been preserving all the Protestant books which he had taken from them for the last twenty years. What a mass of Bibles were devoured by the flames! What columns of fire ascended to heaven from the

multitude of Protestant works, from Luther's thick Domestic Expositor down to his small Catechism! The writings of Arndt, Spangenberg, Dillherr, and many other theologians, all found here a glowing grave. Hans gazed sadly at this detestable act. A Bible, borne by the force of the flames and wind, partly consumed, fell at his feet. In an instant it was concealed under his coat, though it burned his waistcoat. Rejoicing in his prize, he was about to retire with the two boys, when they found themselves unexpectedly stopped by some imperial soldiers. At first he attributed their detention to the Bible which he had concealed, but he soon discovered that all the bystanders were subject to the same fate. They were all driven together into a group, which consisted of men, women, and children, all equally lost in astonishment. A fearful light now dawned upon them, when they saw those who were proprietors selected from them and made to stand aside, and the non-proprietors driven along without delay. The latter, they found, were to be expelled from the country at once without ceremony. Among these were Hans, and Manlicken's sons, although Hans had endeavoured to establish their right to remain on account of their father's property, and by the production of Pommer's deed of gift. But the officer in command drove the lads back into the crowd of the rejected. Packfest, their faithful dog, received a sabre cut on his leg from this hero, as he was about to revenge the violence offered to his masters, who, taking their bleeding favourite in their arms, were now glad that they were to quit a country in which even irrational creatures were not spared by the brutal soldiers.

Some of the poor people now entreated permission to go to their homes and procure warmer clothing, some to take leave of their friends, and others to provide themselves with money for the expenses of their long journey. Their urgent prayers remained unheeded.

"Salute my poor wife," cried Hans, on parting with an acquaintance who had stopped behind, "and Manlicken's wife; tell them not to grieve on our account. It may be that God for us will——"

His words were lost in the loud lamentations of his fellow-sufferers, and in a short time they were out of sight of their brethren, who remained behind in a state of stupefaction. Every now and then the outcasts were joined by similar groups coming from different quarters; so that at last the entire body had augmented to eight hundred men, who were all thus expelled from Salzburg.

Long before the surly cornet, upon committing his charge to a stronger escort, had returned even to Werffen, he met a young woman coming along in tears with a little boy in her arms.

"Whither art thou going?" he rudely asked her.

"To my husband," she answered with difficulty.

"Thou wilt stay here," he austere commanded.

Barbara, now throwing herself upon her knees before him, said, "May God forgive me that for the first time in my life I kneeled to a human being; but I implore thee to let me go to my husband, and this child to his father! Have pity on me, dear sir."

The cornet bit his lips, but gave her no answer. Then dismounting his horse and dismissing his men, he grasped Barbara by the arm, and forcibly led her back to her cottage. She wept in silence, her child cried aloud; but the grief of the afflicted and forsaken creatures neither moved the hard-hearted man nor the two dragoons by whom he was attended.

Arrived at the house, they found the soldiers who were quartered there in a room loudly vociferating and drinking.

"Sluggards! that ye are," said the cornet, in reproof. "Oh!" answered the intoxicated men. "We have not been idle, we have been endeavouring to assist the priests in converting our hostess, but the heretic mistress of the house has escaped from our efforts, and is nowhere to be found."

A new cause of alarm for poor Barbara! In the greatest anxiety she hastened out of the room with her child, followed by the prying cornet. Not a corner remained unsearched. Loudly and frequently she called out her mother's name, but, alas! in vain.

The most dreadful apprehensions now filled her mind. There stood the dough prepared for the oven, which was already heated for the purpose of baking it.

The horrors of the scene which Barbara witnessed are here spared to the reader. When the drunken soldiers found that the poor woman had taken refuge in the heated oven, they shut her up there, heedless of her cries of agony.

Barbara sat by the charred corpse. She could not weep, and her brain seemed on fire. Bereft of father, mother, husband, and brothers, she possessed only her little Peter, who, unconscious of his mother's wretchedness, playfully wound his tiny arms around her neck.

After some commiserating neighbours had interred the deceased without psalmody or passing-bell, and in unconsecrated ground, according to the decree issued by the archbishop against the heretics, Barbara was desirous of rejoicing her Hans, and of quitting a country where she and her child never more could hope for happiness; but this too was denied her. By some influence her efforts to escape were hindered. The commander frequently came himself, always to the great terror of little Peter, to whom the grim soldier was an object of aversion.

The winter now set in, with its frost, its snow, and its ice. When Barbara was lying sleepless upon her bed, and the wind was howling and moaning around her cottage, driving flakes of snow against the window-panes, thickly frosted over, she would fancy that she heard the voice of her Hans outside piteously entreating for admission. "Where may he be now?" she would ask herself. "Has he a shelter from the benumbing cold?" And then she would dream that she beheld him, trembling with cold in his tattered clothes, wandering about in snow and ice, and with true affection carrying her wearied brothers upon his shoulders; then she would see him cross the deceptive surface of a snow-covered lake, which breaking in, they all sank together, without any one hearing their cries for help. Starting in terror, she would spring up from her bed, the old servant awaking would scold her, while little Peter cried out loudly, thinking that the savage soldier had grasped him, when it was but his mother, who had embraced him in her agony.

At length winter departed, the snow dissolved, the avalanches thundered down into the re-echoing valleys from their lofty heights, torrents rushed along, the grass resumed its verdure, and the blossoms cast off their winter sheathes; the glorious sun ascended higher and higher as spring advanced, and the larks sprang upwards with their songs of jubilee proclaiming the goodness and glory of God. Bleating and lowing with joy, the herds moved to the fresh pastures of the Alp; multitudes of lambs and goats frisked and sported around; the joyous sounds of pigeons and poultry, ducks and geese, now filled the air. Man alone was seen to walk in silence and with downcast eyes through the spring-revived pasturages.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was on a fine day in May, in the year 1732, that a travelling mechanic appeared at Barbara's door. As she was kindly offering him a piece of bread, he pointed to a paper which he kept concealed under his coat, and then rapidly and cautiously hid it under the straw of the deserted dog-kennel. "Hans and your brothers," he whispered as he went away, "send their love to thee." Barbara taking the paper and her child with her, hurried into a thicket, where, having lulled him to sleep, she with trembling hands opened the packet, which consisted of numerous leaves, written in several hands, as follows—

"Kauffbauern, 28th December, 1731.

"May God bless thee, my dear Barbara! To learn that thou and our child and mother are well would give me heartfelt satisfaction. Myself, Frank, and Joseph, are, God be thanked, healthy and vigorous, though we have suffered much from cold, hunger, and evil people. But we are better off at present. I will relate to thee, as well as I can, all that has hitherto happened to us. Thou wilt be lost in wonder, that I have learned to write in so regular a manner: but that is not the case. The good people with whom we are lodging, at my request, have written down what thou here seest. And so I shall always converse with thee when I meet with Christian hearts. Oh! that I only knew how this letter could be conveyed into thine hands! Well, God will, I trust, give me the means of its reaching thee safely. Thou must know that when I was so unexpectedly hurried away, without being able to take leave of thee and my little Peter, my heart was ready to break with grief. Frank and Joseph were sooner resigned. They had enough to do with their Packfest, in stopping his blood and binding up his wound with their pocket-handkerchiefs, after the cowardly officer struck him with his sabre. They suffered but little from the piercing November wind, for they kept themselves tolerably warm with the dog, which they carried alternately, refusing to part with him, even when I offered to take a share in the burden. Sometimes we overtook a troop of sufferers, and sometimes others overtook us, so that our number was continually increasing. They were all poor people, day-labourers, servants, and children, as badly provided with clothes as myself. It gave us, however, some consolation, that we were not the only exiles; though I do not maintain that that was a right feeling. And only think, there came with us voluntarily one hundred and seven men, who, although Catholics, were bitterly proclaiming against the injustice with which we were treated. Thus we arrived at Salzburg late in the evening. Here, in reality, we first began to experience want and suffering. As for sleeping-places, we were thrust into cold barns and stables, where, upon hard couches, and with empty stomachs, we were left to freeze at leisure. Through fear or hatred, not a soul offered us a morsel of bread, for which may God forgive them! But an old woman perceiving that I was without a hat (for I had lost it on the way), brought me secretly a well-worn periuke, with numerous holes in it, which she procured I know not where. I blessed her for this kindness. I had already made a sort of cap and coat with twisted fir and brushwood, which in some measure protected me from the cold. As we lay as thick as herrings, the night passed off well enough. Packfest kept your brothers warm, and thus repaid the boys for the care which they had taken of him. I could not, however, close my eyes in sleep, for thou wert always standing before me with

our child. It also occurred to me how wonderfully the word of the Lord was accomplished in regard to us, where he says, 'But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.' Was it not in the winter, and on the eve of the Sabbath? Who would have thought that these words might be applied to us. Alas! I cannot conceal it from thee, though I tell it with great pain, that thirty-six of us had their minds so weakened by their affliction that they deserted their faith. May the Lord not lay this sin to their account. On the following morning we were taken to the vessels which were to carry us down the Salza. With a sad gaze we took leave of our mountains—a farewell glance we cast upon the haughty city with its cruel inhabitants, and then crowded closely together, for the air on the water was piercing cold. After that we consoled ourselves with the hymn of the pious Scheitberger, thus beginning:—

"A sorrowing exile, lorn I roam,
An exile in God's holy cause;
Banished by tyrants from my home,
Because I loved the Gospel laws.

"I suffer; but, Redeemer, Lord,
Didst thou not suffer countless woes?
Then let me hail thy will and word,
And follow thee till life shall close.

"Whate'er may be that sacred will,
Submissively my cross I'll bear;
Thy word shall be my leader still,
And faith shall triumph o'er despair."

"The banks and mountains resounded with our voices, and we sang until the soldiers commanded us to be silent. We arrived without accident at Ditmaringen and Theisendorf, where we remained inactive for eighteen days, during which we were compelled to find our own provisions. It was by good fortune that I had three florins in my pocket, which I had taken to pay the costs of laying the claim before the court. I had almost forgotten to tell you that I have with me a half-destroyed Bible, which I saved from the flames at Werffen. We were detained a long time at this place, because we were forbidden to enter the Bavarian territory, until at last the permission of the elector was granted. It is said to have been very graciously accorded. I must confess we did not feel sorry when we had passed the frontier of Salzburg and stepped upon Bavarian ground.

"We proceeded rapidly, for the Salzburg commissary, a Herr Von Memmingen, who was to accompany us to our journey's end, kept his horse continually on the trot. Nevertheless it was already dark, and the gates had closed when we arrived at Kauffbauern. There we stood shivering after our toilsome march. At last we commenced singing to console ourselves, 'A firm castle is our God.' And when our devout tones were heard in the stillness of night, they touched the hearts of the inhabitants, who immediately caused the gates to be opened to us. Singing we entered the town, where we were received by the light of innumerable torches and candles. How many tears did these good souls shed at the recital of our distresses, especially when they saw our little children come tripping along with their tiny hands benumbed with cold. We were also much pitied for our clothes, which were so ill-adapted to keep off the inclemency of the weather. I attracted their attention more than any one else. And truly I must have made a strange appearance in my enormous wig, which hung half-way down my back, and in my coat of twisted green brushwood. 'Let us do good to every one, but most of all to our brethren in faith!' With these words, a gentleman in splendid attire, the moment he saw me,

offered me his costly fur cap in exchange for my wig, and then ran off with it bare-headed, with as much satisfaction as I naturally felt at the good exchange, assuring me that he should preserve it as a pleasing memento. Not long afterwards a beautiful and timid little girl brought me a very good warm coat, of such fine cloth that I almost feel ashamed to go about in it. We were then lodged in those inns of which the landlords were Protestants, or with Protestant citizens and members of council. My dear Barbara, I have never taken the gifts of God into my mouth without returning him hearty thanks, but never with such fervour as now. What refreshment, what strength, did we not receive from the warm and excellent food of which we had so long stood in need! After a stay of four days, we shall leave this place to-morrow. Care was taken of our sick in the hospital, the children were baptized, and we all received munificent gifts from the citizens and merchants. We felt great happiness in beholding for the first time a Protestant church here. With the deepest devotion, we and our innocent little children entered the venerable house of God, where there was a sermon preached particularly on our account by the Rev. Jacob Brucker. Never shall I forget the tears of joy that we shed, and the rest of the congregation wept with us. He commenced with the following words, from the book of Revelation xii. 11:—‘And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.’ But his principal text was from Matthew x. 32: ‘Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.’ Greatly fortified by this spiritual food, as well as by the bodily sustenance which we had received, with firm courage we proceeded farther on our way. God preserve my Barbara, and also our child, not forgetting mother Catherine, and father Manlicken, whom may he speedily deliver from his bonds!’

“Halle, April 26th, 1732.

“MY DEAR BARBARA,—I have not yet found means of having my first letter safely delivered to thee. Thou wilt, therefore, receive my communications all at once. The commencement of our journey was bad; the progress of it was sometimes bad, and sometimes better; the end transcendently glorious. May the Lord preserve us from pride and vanity! For, my dear wife, where we are now arrived the greatest honour is shewn us. If we come in sight of a village or a town, all the bells are set ringing to welcome and greet us. Waggoners are sent for the sick, the aged, and the children. Before entering any place, hundreds come out to meet us; the citizens receive us under arms—not, as in Salzburg, to strike us with terror; no! but to show their kind feeling towards us. They present arms, they beat the drums, and all is done just as if they were receiving a reigning sovereign. However, through my great gladness I have begun my story at the end, instead of the beginning. Now attend. We left Kauffbaier on the 1st January, after having experienced so kind a reception; but that we might not be dazzled by looking at the sunshine, a tempest soon followed. At Kempten, for instance, we were refused entrance by the warden, Baron Von Freiberg. In upper Bavaria, men and women, at the instigation of the priests, opposed our passage, and we dared not remain there at night. Thus it also happened at first at Augsburg, where the warden of Holzapfel, Von Herxheim, had excited the Catholic town-council against us; but, however, the Protestant town-council and citizens of their own accord took our part, and treated us with great

benevolence. On the 28th March we arrived at Donauwörth, in Oettinge, where a kind man, the Prussian commissary Göbel, gave us a welcome reception, and from that time allowed to each man four grosschen daily, each woman three, and each child two grosschen, for travelling expenses. This, however, we could not spend, so many presents were sent to us from every quarter. In Harburg we were well received, as also at Anspach, where the Margrave defrayed our travelling expenses, allowed us free quarters everywhere, and provided us with waggoners.

“But the bishopric of Bamberg sternly refused us a passage, and we were therefore compelled to go back towards Nuremberg, where we fared better, as well as in the territory of Baireuth. We kept Palm Sunday (April 2) at Erlangen. The Landgravine Sophia, the widow of the late landgrave, resides here, and permitted fifty of us to visit her castle, where she treated us sumptuously; and her servants likewise took twenty of us into their houses. At table, people of the highest rank esteemed it a pleasure to wait upon us. The landgravine is a most gracious lady; may the Lord repay her a thousand-fold the good that she did to us! On the following day we left Erlangen, and were accompanied out of the city by the whole university, singing heart-cheering hymns, who, before taking leave, distributed the money that had been collected for us, in equal shares to every man, woman, and child. We kept Easter Sunday at Hof, where we likewise received the kindest treatment. On the third day of Easter we reached Schleiz, in Voigtländ, where Henry I reigns with his consort Dorothea Louisa. Here the clergy came out to meet us, the citizens were under arms, and each of us received a billet for quarters. Nay, they actually struggled amongst themselves who should receive us, and some wept because they could not have us in their houses. The countess, moreover, sent us two large hampers containing linen and clothes, and one hundred and twenty dollars besides, which were all distributed amongst us. Each of us also received two pounds of bread, and two quarts of beer, not to mention what we had from the citizens. A woman of Salzburg here gave birth to a son, to which the countess, together with the Counsellor Böhme, and the Burgomaster Weise, stood sponsors, and had it christened in the chapel at the castle, and after the ceremony they presented it with some handsome gifts. At Gera the people looked with great wonder at old Eberhard Weidner, whose beard, white as snow, flowed down to his breast. In Saxony, as much as we saw of it, we were treated with remarkable kindness: presents poured in upon us from all sides. Oh, couldst thou but enjoy some of our superfluity! We were not permitted to make the short circuit by Dresden.

“It is but natural,’ said our friendly host at Weissenfels, ‘that our sovereign the king will not like to see you poor people, who left your all for the sake of the gospel, which he has abjured for the sake of earthly gain. He would certainly be put to shame by you!’

“Poor man, how grieved I shall be if this prove true! If he had even had ten kingdoms he could do no more than satisfy his hunger, for which he has quite means enough in Saxony. They that will be rich fall into temptation and snares. We are now entering into our new country. We have already reached one of its towns, which reminded us of our well-beloved homes. The same smell of salt as at Hallein, the same perpetual smoke, the same vast salt works.

We are soon to see our new sovereign. My heart

beats at the thought. Really, judging from what we have already heard of him and received from him on our long journey, he must indeed be the father of his people—a very different sovereign to our archbishop. We poor exiled people can be of no sort of use to him; we bring him nothing, and yet he desires to have us, and expends upon us so much money! But stay, I remember I have indeed something for him—I mean my half-burnt Bible. Will he accept of it, I wonder? Well, we shall see. To-morrow we proceed by Wittemberg to Potsdam, where the king is at present residing. May God protect thee!"

"Berlin, 2nd May, 1732.

"Praise be to God! The fulfilment of his word is continually more gloriously displayed towards us. 'Kings shall be thy guardians,' it says, and they are so. 'The Lord hath appointed his angels over thee, that they may guard thee in all thy ways;' and they have done so. 'Go from thy land and thy kinsfolk, and out of thy father's house, into a land which I will show thee.' It is fortunate for us that we have followed his word; his blessing evidently attends us. Ah, Barbara, nothing would be wanting to complete my happiness, if thou and my dear child and our parents were with me. Fortunately I do not write this myself; for my flowing tears would blot out every letter. However, I will not be ungrateful, for what God does is for the best. I will therefore briefly relate to thee all that has befallen us. But I had nearly forgotten, from my excessive joy, to tell thee what happened between Halle and Potsdam. Before we were permitted to enter Potsdam, a surgeon came to examine us at the gate, to ascertain if there were any fever or infectious malady amongst us. As there was nothing of the kind, the clergy, the universities, and the children of the orphan school, came for us, and singing spiritual songs all the way, conducted us to the royal gardens. On all sides were luxuriant trees in full blossom. In one of the broad walks we were made to stand in an extended long line. Then a numerous retinue of noblemen and gentlemen approached us. My eyes were quite dazzled, so much did their dresses shine and glitter in the sun. But when at last a gentleman stepped forward, and the people informed us that he was the king, I anxiously listened, in order that I might not lose a word that he uttered. We saluted him with great respect, but not upon our knees. I will now describe to thee this great king, the sovereign of millions of Christians. His appearance was by no means awful or terrible; on the contrary, rather benevolent and very affable, for he conversed with us just as we do amongst ourselves, without the least pride. He wore a dark blue frock coat, on which sparkled only a single star of a very small size; under his surtourt appeared a waistcoat the colour of red tiles, edged with a small gold band, snow-white trousers, and high polished black boots. Upon his head rested a small three-cornered cap, bordered with white swansdown, and at his left side hung a small rapier. In short, a nobler-looking king can nowhere be found. He first took notice of a youth of fourteen years of age, who had forsaken his Catholic parents for the sake of the gospel, and asked him how he could do so. But the latter readily answered, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.' Then the king asked him what he now intended to do, and who would take care of him. 'My father and mother have forsaken me,' replied the boy, 'but the Lord taketh me in.'

The king smiled kindly, as he placed his hand on the boy's head. I now took heart, and offered this gracious prince the burnt Bible as a memorial of us poor people, who had nothing else to present. On his

accepting it, I informed him of the circumstances through which it came in that condition. He listened attentively to me, and then ordered the book to be carried into his library. I now also entreated him to employ his influence in behalf of poor Manlicken and the other prisoners, and I did not forget your right to the Schüppelhof, of which I gave him the deed of gift. I cannot now understand how I could have had so much courage as to speak to him; but he was very affable, and he assured me that I should soon hear from him, and that he would not forget me.

"We were now led to table, or rather to a number of tables, in the midst of the garden, and what a magnificent dinner was provided! I hope that we may not be spoiled, so as no longer to relish God's gifts of bread and water; we have now so much beer and wine, and meat of all kinds, sent for our consumption. We had also rich presents from the king, queen, and their officers. After our meal, we knelt down to say grace, and the officers themselves knelt down with us. On our taking leave, the good king once more assured us of his favour, with these words: 'Ye shall prosper, my children; ye shall prosper with me.' We could only answer by tears of joy and the hearty cry of, 'May God reward thee, sire! May God bless and reward thee!'

"We then proceeded to Berlin. And I must now try and recollect all that occurred, that I may omit nothing. At the Schaaf Bridge we were met by the clergy and all the public schools. Campo, the pastor, addressed us in a discourse which had for a text the words, 'The Lord bless you more and more, you and your children.' After this fifty New Testaments were distributed amongst us. Rejoice, Barbara; at home God's word was taken from us, and here it is brought to us! We entered the city in the following order: first, our commissary on horseback; next the scholars, two and two; then twelve candidates for orders: with as many clergymen, two of them on horseback; behind them came the two candidates who had accompanied us from Halle; then followed our children, then the women, and lastly, all the men. The procession was closed by twenty-three waggons containing our effects and the poor sick people. Our children, with their weak voices, began to sing, 'My God I will not leave,' in which they were joined by the trembling accents of the feeble and aged, commingled with the powerful strains of the men. The melody sounded afar off. While we, sunburnt by our long journey, in our foreign dresses, were walking piously along, the women, with their young children supported or borne in their arms, the old men and women supporting themselves by their walking-staves, we passed through walls of people, men, women, and children, all deeply affected, as also were we at their charity and sympathy. 'These cannot be rebels, as the Archbishop of Salzburg declares they are,' we heard said on all sides. We were led through the royal gardens, in order that the children of the monarch and the nobility might see us. And they also looked upon us with kind compassion, and many turned aside to wipe the tears from their eyes. We stopped before the Königsthor, or royal gate, where we were supplied with quartering billets, and there the Pastor Schönemann welcomed us with a speech in verse, of which, however, I only recollect the beginning—

"Be the word of welcome spoken!

"Lo! the true cause shall prevail!

"Ye the Pope's dire yoke have broken,
Canaan's blessings shall not fail!"

We still remain here, and are constantly receiving innumerable kindnesses from Christians and Jews. Even a Catholic soldier who was standing sentry on the long

bridge of Schildwach gave a man of Salzburg threepence, with these words: 'It is not our Lord God, but only the priests, who occasion your misery.' And now, Barbara, I must conclude my letter; my heart is well-nigh breaking both with joy and melancholy. Come to me speedily. Thou canst not miss the way; any child will show thee the road we have hitherto taken and are still to take. Salute mother Catherine, and kiss my son for me. May the Lord preserve thee safe in body and in soul! Amen.

"Thy rejoicing, and, at the same time, sorrowing
"HANS."

"SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE GAS!"

THERE are very few housekeepers, who, burning gas in their dwellings, are not startled at times with the conviction that something or other in connection with it is not as it should be. For our household gas, whatever may be the cause, indulges in strange vagaries in the course of a year. Now it sings like the kettle on the hob, now it is heard purring like the cat on the rug, and anon it blows a very small trumpet with a wheezy kind of note. At other times it takes to winking and blinking in a most disagreeable manner, as though the several burners were exchanging signals and concocting some mischief together. If it goes out gradually, like a candle burning down in the socket, we know what that means, though we don't like it. When this happens it is always on a Saturday night, and the reason is that the gas at the factory runs short, owing to the immense consumption that takes place in the Saturday night shops and markets, especially in winter, when days are foggy and lights are kindled early.

We had just got to sleep the other night, when we were woken up by a hasty tapping at the door. "Who's there? what's the matter?" we bawl out, only half aroused. "Oh, sir," responds the terrified damsel, "please sir, there's something wrong with the gas, I smell it so plain in my room." We leap out of bed, of course, seizing the night-light, and in another minute are travelling down-stairs, sufficiently alarmed to be wide awake. We sniff and sniff at every step, endeavouring yet fearing to detect the vile odour. Whew! there it is, sure enough!—the girl is right, there *is* something wrong with the gas. What and where can it be? As we descend, the odour grows almost overpowering, and we have only to follow the information of our nose to be well aware that the kitchen is the centre of the grievance. We are not so foolish as to carry the light into the kitchen; so blowing that out, we grope our way in spite of the nuisance, and, throwing open the windows and garden-door, get a brisk draught through the place. A few minutes suffice to expel the mass of the gas, and then rekindling the light we discover at once the cause of the alarm. The kitchen burner, though looped up against the low ceiling, is turned full on, and the gas has been escaping for the last three or four hours; but for the hateful yet admonitory odour, there would certainly have been a blow up. Jemima, who by this time has dressed herself and come down, declares positively that she turned off her gas before going to bed: and so doubtless she did, but in looping up the pipe she *must* have inadvertently turned it on again.

One evening lately, as we stood at the window, the young lady next door rushed suddenly out, and made a frantic rush at our knocker with a series of irregular and convulsive bangs. Seeing that something was amiss,

we opened the door before the performance was half finished. "Oh! Mr. —," gasps out the fair apparition, "there is something wrong with our gas, and mamma is ill, and the servant is out on messages, will you step in kindly and see what's the matter?" Such a request must be obeyed, and we of course return with the young lady. We smell the gas the moment we enter. The escape is from the hall light, which is turned on and off by a tap placed low down, to save the trouble of mounting to the lamp. Some one in reaching hat, stick, or umbrella from the clothes-pegs on the wall, has accidentally turned it on, and hence the fright of the ladies. The invalid mamma, who is in a low nervous state, can hardly be reassured when the mischief is repaired, and is hardly prevented from sending for a policeman, who, she has a vague idea, can alone set the matter perfectly right.

Not very long since, we formed one of a convivial party assembled to welcome the return of a young midshipman after an absence of several years. Dinner came off at half-past seven, and a most hospitable spread there was, under the brilliant light of a huge cut-glass gasalier. About sixteen of us had encircled the table, and were engaged in the deliberate discussion of the first course, flavoured at intervals by a gentle semi-witticism from friend Bolter, when I saw by an accidental glance at Miss Spinster, my *vis-d-vis*, that something was not quite as it should be; she had laid down her knife and fork and thrown back her head; the next moment other ladies were following her example, and I was wondering what it could mean, when a gush of that unmistakable odour from the gaspipe invaded the savour of the viands, and at that precise instant the hostess, with a face of terror, screamed out, "Oh dear! there's something wrong with the gas!" Bolter, who is up to everything, and whose presence of mind is marvellous, was on his legs in a moment, and with an "Allow me, madam," had left the room, and was plunging down towards the nether regions. We heard the squall of cook as he dashed into the kitchen, followed by the guttural tones of Biggins the greengrocer, who had been enlisted for the nonce to wait at table; and then, as we shrank in disgust from the increasing mal-odour, we could hear a lumbering in the cellar beneath us, and the solemn voice of Bolter, like that of the Ghost in "Hamlet," burrowing its way, as it were, beneath the ground. The situation grew tragic, the lights began to burn blue, and as we held our breath and our noses, suddenly went out, and we were left in total darkness, only that a few red rays gleamed from the fire at the end of the room. While the ladies, quitting their seats, huddled together in a corner, the gentlemen threw open the window-shutters and the windows, and as the air rushed in and the gas rushed out, we got a little welcome relief. Then Bolter came in with a candle—an awful figure he presented, with his hands, face, and shirt-front black as soot; but we hailed him as a benefactor, knowing that by turning off the gas at the meter, as he had done, he had saved us from a blow up. When the cause of the mischief came to be investigated, it was found that cook, in her haste, had crushed one of the service pipes in the cellar, causing a rent in it several inches in length. We need not dwell on the sequences of that unfortunate mishap, but it shows how the pipes should always be protected from such accidents.

Some time ago, when sleeping at the house of a friend in the city, we were shaken out of sleep and almost out of bed, shortly after five o'clock of a winter's morning, by a crash like that of a twelve-inch shell, which seemed to shatter everything around. Several

of the window-panes flew in fragments into the room, and of the rest not one remained unbroken. Venturing at length to the window to see what has happened, we can discern through the semi-darkness (for most of the street lamps have been extinguished by the shock) a crowd gathering around the front of the "Star and Banner," some forty paces down the street on the opposite side of the way. It is no use getting into bed again, with the cold air and fog for bed-fellows; so we dress; and in a few minutes mingle with the policemen, cabmen, and early birds, who make up the crowd. It is a scene of fearful violence that we have come to witness. The entire basement-front of the "Star and Banner" is blown out—plate-glass, wainscoting, ponderous shutters, pediment at top, and a good part of the brickwork at bottom—and all hurled, like a shot from a gun, clean across the wide road against the opposite houses. The dwellings on either side are in a condition about as bad, their shop-fronts and shutters being smashed to ruin, while of the tall houses opposite there is not one for forty yards in either direction that can show a whole pane of glass—the sashes of those fronting the shock presenting the appearance of having never been glazed at all. The roadway, meanwhile, for some distance, is covered with a species of glass gravel, every blown-out pane being crushed into minute particles. The worst part of the spectacle is poor "Boots," of the "Star," who has been sent flying across the road, with the rest of the wreck, and whom, as he lies stunned and bleeding, the policemen are preparing to carry on a stretcher to the hospital. The damage in this case amounted to several thousand pounds, and the cause of it all was the drunken recklessness of a gang of London "lambs." They were carousing at the bar up to twelve o'clock the night before, and would not go away when the landlord bade them. To get rid of them he turned off the gas; in revenge, the scamps, ere they groped their way out, turned it on again in half-a-dozen places. The bar, shut off from the house, became filled with gas in the course of the night, and when poor "Boots" came down with his candle in the morning, to light the fire and clean up, he must have been blown into the street before he was aware of his danger.

Escape of gas often happens from children playing with the jets. We have known a country servant, on her first introduction to a gas-lit bedroom, get rid of the light by blowing it out. Another turned the hand round, but turned it back again after the light was out. If the main pipe is turned off at night, there is always risk of some jet in the rooms being forgotten, and the gas escaping when the main is turned on next evening.

We have known various explosions, the source of which could never be traced. Once the contents of a whole conservatory, flowers, pots, plants, shrubs, and a miniature waterfall under the patronage of a plaster Psyche, all came tumbling into the street in the middle of the day, propelled by a blast of ignited gas, no one knew how or why. Some years ago, while rusticating in a western county, we were ourselves nearly knocked down by the contents of a barber's shop window: blocks, fronts, wigs, pomatum, soap, scent-bottles, together with a couple of wax figures, all came out with a sudden flash and bang, depositing themselves in the mud of the road, to the intense amazement and chagrin of the proprietor, who declared that he had not the slightest conception of the cause.

Perhaps there is no better illustration of the old maxim, "Familiarity breeds contempt," than is afforded by the frequency of domestic gas explosions, and the little importance the public attaches to them. If we

had been told when the use of gas in dwellings was first proposed, that there would be hundreds of explosions annually in London alone, and had believed what was told us, it is questionable whether housekeepers would not have risen in a body against it, and kept it outside their walls; but now, having grown up, hand to hand as it were with the combustible element, we take it for granted that it is completely under our control, and trust ourselves without misgivings to the chapter of accidents. When any serious case occurs in our immediate neighbourhood, we are apt to fortify ourselves with the determination to be on our guard, and for a time, perhaps, we don't go to bed until we have shut the gas out of the house; but we soon relax our vigilance and cease to think about it. It would be but common prudence, seeing the real danger that is run, to revise our gas fittings at regular intervals, without waiting for the warning odour that attends an escape, and which may come, as we have shown above, at the most inopportune moment. It is advisable also, on moving into a house where gas has been burned, to have the whole apparatus first examined and certified by a practical gasfitter. Out-going tenants are apt to quarrel with the landlord on the subject of piping they have been to the expense of laying; the landlord will not buy it of them, but will force them to make good any damage occasioned in removing it—so it happens that out of revenge they will often render the pipes useless by cutting or piercing them, to the annoyance and peril of the incoming tenant.

There is one fact noticeable in connection with gas, that shows there is something always wrong somewhere. We allude to the prodigious waste that takes place. Of all the gas made at the factory, and passing through the factory meter, very little over one-half is ultimately paid for by consumers. It is known that an enormous waste takes place from the large underground pipes, the junctions of which, on the English system, are rarely, if ever, perfectly gas-tight. The extent of loss from this source can only be guessed; but one needs only to pause a moment at any excavation in the streets where the gas mains are laid bare, to be convinced that it must be very large, looking to the hundreds of miles of large iron pipes laid down in London streets. Much is also lost by destructive fires, when the service pipes are melted, and quantities burned to waste before it can be turned off. Again, persons who do not burn by meter, but by contract, are apt to have their timepieces at fault, and keep their lights going long after they should be extinguished—though this offence is not so common as it was, the practice of burning by meter being now enforced in London, and common in other places. The last and most disgraceful source of loss that occurs to us is that arising from the tricks of dishonest consumers: every now and then some mean-souled knave will exercise his ingenuity by inserting a small pipe into the branch pipe from the main, on the wrong side of the meter, thus drawing off a half, or it may be more, of his supply before it enters the meter, so that it escapes being registered and set down in the quarterly account. We have known tradesmen in thriving circumstances, and apparently respectable, to be guilty of this roguery—and have known them, also, to come down with a swingeing solatium to the gas company to prevent their ingenuity from being made public.

In conclusion, let us remind our friends who burn gas, that since its introduction into dwellings, which dates about forty-five years back, the number of destructive fires in London, in proportion to the population, has more than doubled. This consideration

ought to be an inducement to constant watchfulness and precaution, and should urge us to instant investigation whenever the alarm is sounded of, "Something wrong with the gas!"

THE EXPLORER'S CHRISTMAS IN AUSTRALIA.

BY T. BAINES, F.R.G.S.

It would be superfluous to inform the readers of the "Leisure Hour" that Christmas in the southern hemisphere is a season of warmth, of sunshine, and of open-air enjoyment. Of course, throughout all Christendom the occasion is the same. I have heard the magnificent hymn of the nativity sung in the churches of South Africa as it is at home, and I have heard also, in the island of Timor, two hundred Malay children mingling their voices with those of the Dutch colonists in the Angels' Song. But in the terrestrial festivities of the season in such regions the fireside enjoyments of England have no place. Friends and relatives interchange short visits to say a few words of kindly greeting, and picnic parties, in the lightest costume, escape from the heated town to spend the rest of the day in the coolest and shadiest groves.

My own reminiscences of Christmas-day recall many a wild scene from the stormy coasts of England to the populous towns and solitary deserts of Africa or Australia, in peace or war, in plenty or in starvation. Of these I have selected the Christmas of 1855 as the subject of my present sketch. In the early part of that year I had been appointed artist to an expedition to explore the north-west parts of Australia, and had proceeded to Sydney to join Mr. Augustus Charles Gregory, the commander. Two vessels were engaged : the barque *Monarch*, which took on board 50 horses and 150 or 200 sheep at Moreton Bay, and left us at the mouth of the Victoria River, and the *Tom Tough* schooner, which carried the sheep up the river, while Mr. Gregory crossed the country with the horses to the spot chosen as our main camp. Our little schooner took the ground in going up, and nearly became a wreck; but after twenty-seven days' beating about on the sandbanks was brought up to the main camp, and was there substantially, though only partially, repaired by the skill and industry of Captain Gourlay. A wharf was built alongside her of her iron pig ballast, and the remains of this will for many years to come indicate the locality of our camp.

It was in truth a pretty little spot, about eighty miles from the river mouth, beyond the rise and fall of the tide, although the water was brackish several miles higher, except in the rainy season, when the floods poured down as if to dispute the empire of the ocean. The mangroves which fringe the borders of the salt rivers, and which, in fact, perform an important part in the reclamation of land from the sea, by converting newly-formed shoals into soil fit to bear a higher class of vegetation, had not yet entirely ceased, but seemed mingling with and giving place to trees more proper to a fresh-water stream. Gum-trees of various kinds formed park-like groves upon the higher banks—some with that peculiar smooth white bark and graceful turn of limb, that caused our excellent doctor, the late J. R. Elsey, to think it so like a beautiful and well-turned arm, that he always experienced a desire to feel its pulse.

A small but clear and permanent spring, under a couple of gouty-stem trees—a kind of Baobab, named after our commander *Adansonia Gregorii*—supplied water enough for our own use. The surviving horses were driven further afield to graze and drink, and our

sheep, by the disaster of the river voyage, had been reduced to about forty. Rough poles with forks left on them, for the support of roof-trees or rafters, were cut as we cleared the ground, and a substantial store and dwelling-house was formed. The roof was stoutly thatched, and the walls were in a great measure formed of the bottoms, the sides, and wheels of our drays, most of the draught horses being unfortunately in the list of those that had perished. The oven was built under the large trees near the spring, and the forge under a similar group at a little distance. The dense foliage gave abundant shade, while the numerous white blossoms relieved its verdure; and the acid pulp of the succeeding fruit, boiled with sugar, formed a grateful medicine to the poor seamen when, from the destruction of their provisions, scurvy began to attack them. The young shoots of the wild vine also were gathered, and the negro who served as cook gave us them under the title of rhubarb pies.

The officers and men built houses, huts, or bowers, according to their taste, covering them with sheets of bark or thatch, or with cool, fresh leafy branches, gathered every two or three days. The three sides not protected by the river were surrounded by a mound and trench, within which it was a standing order that no native was to be admitted. For though, as my sketch shows, we had occasional friendly intercourse with them, adding to the snakes or rats, or other small animals they cooked for themselves, gifts of bread or fat pork from our own stores, they were exceedingly capricious, and Mr. Gregory wisely judged it best to reduce the chance of any quarrel with our men as much as possible.

Alligators and fish of various kinds abounded in the river; lizards up to six feet long, cranes and storks, pigeons, parrots, and cockatoos, black, white, and rose-coloured, abounded in the woods, all serving as welcome additions to our fare. On an adjoining tributary, which I visited when searching for horses, and which Mr. Gregory named after me "The Baines River," I found the trees so thickly crowded with perching ducks as to convey the idea of the densest possible foliage. The rainy season commenced in November, and consequently at Christmas the country was covered with its richest verdure.

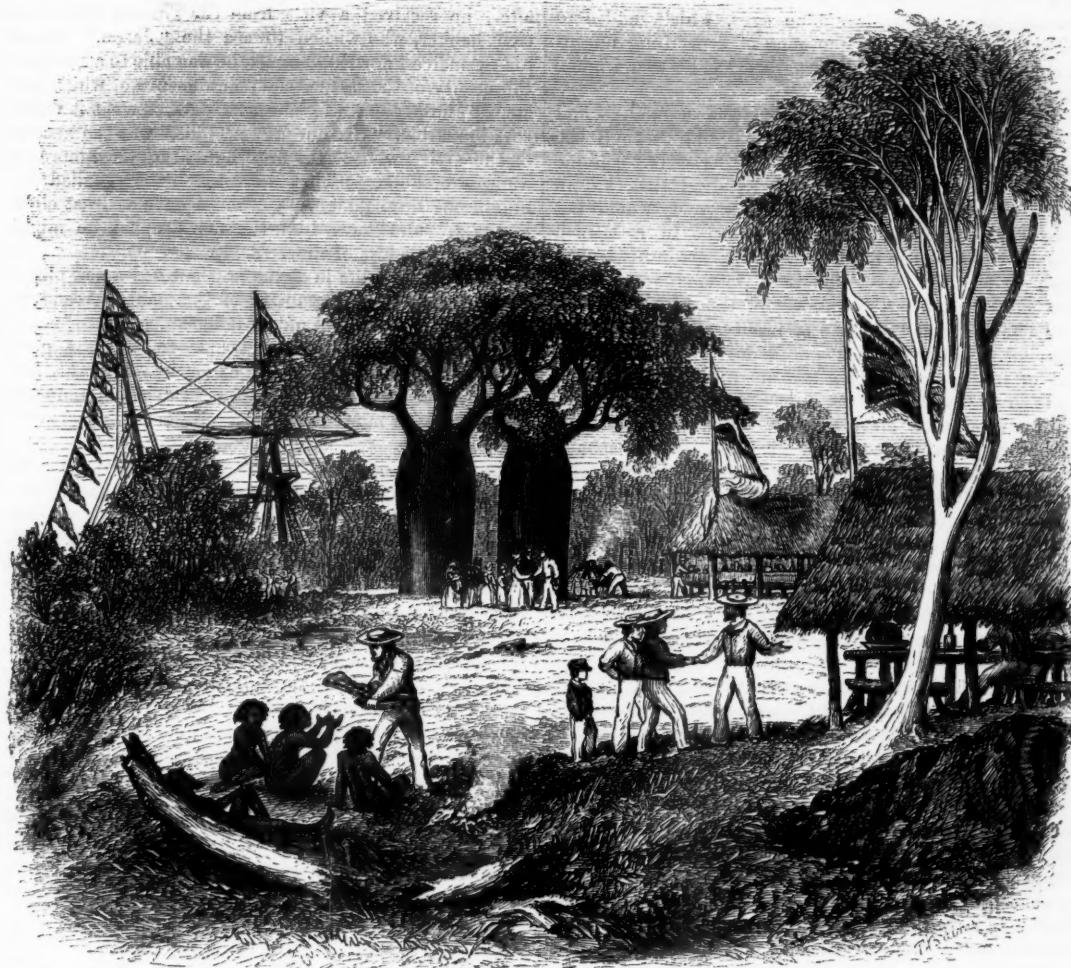
The labours of an explorer are neither few nor light. Even though he bears the rank of a scientific officer, he must not only mingle in the various occupations of the men, but in cases of emergency must take upon himself the most laborious part, teaching the unskilful, encouraging the industrious, and shaming the indolent or desponding by his example. There are times when even the rest of the Sabbath is disturbed by accidents unknown at home. But this is rather the exception than the rule, and most travellers, so far as I have seen, keep it, not merely as a day of rest, but also set apart a portion of it for some form of religious observance.

It was remarked by Leichardt, as well as others, that it was a good thing to let the men look forward to holidays, say on the principal festivals of the Church, or on the birthday of the sovereign, and to make whatever addition is possible to the usual fare. I believe he celebrated the birthday of the King of Prussia by mixing a little fat in his damper. And I have given a handful of raisins to an honest, hardworking fellow who was desirous of doing nothing all day in memory of St. Patrick.

On Christmas-day, 1855, although our meal was frugal, it was still not scanty. The regulation plum-pudding graced our board; the remnant of our little

flock furnished us with fresh meat, a bottle of wine, by permission of the doctor, enabled us to drink the health of absent friends; and tea and coffee, with sugar, but without milk, and skilfully-made light cakes, followed;

which wealthy friends or elevated position confer, he succeeded in reaching an eminence in the world of art which has gained renown, not only for himself, but for his country.



CHRISTMAS-DAY IN NORTH-WEST AUSTRALIA.

and the men enjoyed themselves in reading or other quiet amusements.

I am not now giving a history of our expedition, yet I think the reader will feel sufficient interest in it to be glad to hear that Mr. Gregory explored the whole course of the Victoria River, and traced another stream, which he called Sturt's Creek, 300 miles farther into the interior—that he discovered in the vicinity of the Victoria three million acres of good pasture land, and that on his return he was rewarded by the reception of the gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society.

THORWALDSEN THE SCULPTOR.

THE recent publication in Paris of a life of this celebrated Danish sculptor,* affords a good opportunity of laying before our readers some points of his history most worthy of note. Possessing none of the advantages

Albert Bartholomew Thorwaldsen was born in Copenhagen, November 19th, 1770. His father was a native of Iceland, to which his paternal ancestors also belonged. His mother was the daughter of a Danish pastor. His childhood was unmarked by anything striking, except the delight which it gave him to be allowed to go to the workshop of his father, who was engaged as carver of figure-heads in the royal dockyard at Copenhagen. To assist in this work, as soon as he could handle the requisite tools, was a great source of pleasure to him.

In accordance with the privilege enjoyed by the children of the Government *employés*, Thorwaldsen was sent to a public school at the age of eleven. He does not appear to have made much progress with his learning, but his talent for drawing and art attracted the notice of Abildgaard, the historical painter, who, perceiving his capability of becoming something better than a ship-carver, sent him to the Academy, where he rapidly gained distinction, and took the best prizes. His earliest works were characterised by a certain amplitude and magnificence of form, but there was

* By M. Eugène Plon, with illustrations of his works.

ambiguity in the design, and affectation and want of freedom in the positions.

As a student, Thorwaldsen was very quiet and retiring. He rarely spoke, and never laughed. There was an air of melancholy about him, and a depth of mournfulness in his clear blue eyes, which, added to delicate health and an ignorance of everything unconnected with art, gave little promise that he would make his way in the world.

But though the young student was so modest and bashful, his works spoke for him; and through the patronage of Count Reventlow, he was sent to Rome with an annual allowance of four hundred thalers from the Academy. As his health and poverty would not permit a journey by land, he was sent in a Danish frigate, whose figure-head he had perhaps in his boyish days helped to carve. After a tedious voyage, he reached Rome in the beginning of the year 1807, and was astonished at the world of beauty which burst upon his view. To use his own expression, "the snow melted out of his eyes," and he saw art in such a different light as to lose all confidence in his own performances. All his ideas were changed, and with that industrious perseverance which was such an important element of his ultimate success, he devoted himself almost exclusively for five years to the study of the antique, of which he found such wonderful specimens in Rome. He renewed the acquaintance which he had formed with Carstens, one of the most remarkable painters of his time, whose influence over him while in the Academy at Copenhagen had been very great. Carstens took a great interest in the young artist, and gave him much help in his studies.

His principal friend in Rome was Zoega, the Danish archaeologist, to whom he had been warmly recommended. He gave Thorwaldsen a cordial reception, but blamed the Academy, in a private letter, for sending "such raw and ignorant people to Rome." The four years of his residence with Zoega so improved him, that from being merely a clever sculptor he became a master, and gave a direction to all the art of his time. Zoega criticised his performances very carefully, and pointed out faults in conception or execution in the most unsparing way. Eventually, however, Thorwaldsen appears to have chafed under the well-meant but uncompromising criticism of Zoega, and withdrew himself from his protection.

As a proof of the progress which he had made in Rome, Thorwaldsen modelled in plaster a life-sized statue of "Jason," which obtained the gold medal, but otherwise attracted so little attention, that he broke it up. He acquired the coveted popularity through a colossal figure of the hero, which not only drew forth universal acclamation, but led Canova, then living in Rome, to exclaim, "This work is one of a new and magnificent style of art." But notwithstanding this praise, no one seemed inclined to order a copy of it in marble, and it very nearly shared the fate of its predecessor. Thorwaldsen had exceeded the length of residence permitted by the Danish Academy, and had also exhausted his private resources. He waited week after week, and became at last thoroughly sick at heart through hope deferred. Fame, which had seemed to be approaching him with rapid strides, had again disappeared, and he decided to leave Italy. The poor artist had packed his boxes; his furniture and all superfluous articles had been sold; and he was on the point of leaving Rome, when his compatriot and fellow-student, Hagemann, with whom he had intended to travel to Berlin, found that in consequence of some informality

in their passports, it would not be possible for them to leave till the next day.

This apparently unimportant accident was the turning-point in Thorwaldsen's career. The day's delay changed the current of his future life. A few hours after, he received a visit from Sir Thomas Hope, the rich banker, who wished to see the "Jason." From his extensive knowledge of art, he was able to appreciate the beauty of the statue, the magnificence of which had struck him at the first glance. He asked what it would cost in marble. "Six hundred zechins," was the answer of the artist, whose eyes were lighted up once more by a gleam of hope. "That is far too little," replied the munificent Englishman, "you must have at least eight hundred," and gave him the marble, that he might begin without loss of time.

Thorwaldsen's life in Rome now entered a new phase. Instead of being a stipendiary of the Danish Academy, he enjoyed the position of an independent artist, and a succession of commissions continued to him the good fortune which the generous banker had brought, and which never deserted him. His genius and industry were more and more developed, and his fame increased rapidly.

In 1819, having had a dangerous illness the year before, he returned to Denmark for a brief visit. His reception may be easily imagined. The whole country was proud of him, and honours were showered upon him from every side. He was frequently invited to the royal table, and in order to be able to comply with the rigid etiquette of the Danish Court, was made a privy-councillor. His former companions gave him a very hearty welcome, which he received in a homely and affable way. The only drawback to the pleasure of his return was that his parents were unable to witness his fame, having died shortly after he went to Rome.

Thorwaldsen's visit, though very short, was highly beneficial to the progress of art in Denmark. He received a great number of inquiries as to the best means of promoting artistic taste among the people, which led him to the publication of a work on the subject some time after. But the most important result of his visit was the commission which he received for the decorations of the cathedral of Notre Dame, which had been rebuilt after its destruction during the bombardment by Nelson in 1807. The frieze and the statues executed in consequence of this order are very superior, and are almost the only specimens of religious art which we have from his chisel.

In August of the following year he set out on his return to Rome, visiting several towns on the way. At Warsaw, he took the bust of the Emperor Alexander, and received commissions for the statues of Copernicus and of Prince Poniatowsky. The latter was an equestrian statue in bronze, and was not finished till 1830. We learn with sorrow, not unmixed with disgust, that it was afterwards destroyed by the Russians when quelling the Polish insurrection.

Thorwaldsen subsequently visited Troppau, in Silesia, which was at that time rendered famous by the only event of importance which has occurred in its history—the congress of crowned heads, which met to consider the question of the suppression, by Austria, of the Neapolitan insurrection. The Emperors of Russia and Austria and the King of Prussia were present, and England and France sent ambassadors. Thorwaldsen received such a flattering reception from them, that he prolonged his stay, and went afterwards to Vienna. His residence in the Austrian capital was suddenly terminated by the alarming news from Rome, that

the floor of his studio had given way, causing the destruction of two marble statues and a model in plaster.

On his return to Rome, Thorwaldsen recommenced his labours with untiring energy. His genius and skill appeared to be inexhaustible. He was greatly pleased with the distinguished honour conferred upon him by Cardinal Gonsalvi, who entrusted him with the order for a monument to the deceased Pope Pius VII for St. Peter's. But he was not allowed to enjoy the honour in peace. On all sides there were loud and angry murmurs at a heretic being allowed to execute the statue of a pope for a Catholic cathedral. The death of the cardinal in 1824 gave the envious Roman sculptors renewed courage, especially as the numerous orders which Thorwaldsen had received had caused some delay in the completion of the monument. Their malice seemed about to be rewarded with success, when two events occurred which defeated their designs, and led him to victory.

After the retirement of the painter Canuccini from the presidency of the Academy of San Luca, in Rome, the custom required that a sculptor should be elected to succeed him. Who was more worthy of the honour than Thorwaldsen? Who would confer greater distinction on the Academy than the man whose name was famous throughout Europe? But in spite of his obvious claims to the office, his enemies repeated their objections to him as a Protestant, adding that it was impossible that any one but a Catholic could hold a position which would require his attendance at certain religious festivals.

The matter was laid before Leo XII. "Is there any doubt," asked his Holiness, "that Thorwaldsen is the greatest sculptor living in Rome?" "That cannot be denied," was the reply. "Then there can be very little difficulty about the election. He must be chosen as president. It must, however, be arranged that he shall have opportunities of reporting himself unwell when he finds it necessary." This little "Papal allocution" silenced all opposition, and on the 26th of December, 1825, Thorwaldsen was elected president of the Academy, for the usual period of three years.

The liberal opinions of Leo XII were a good omen of the success of the monument to Pius VII, but he took a more decided step by visiting Thorwaldsen's studio in person, and expressing his approbation of the work, which was in due course completed and finally erected in the year 1831.

Thorwaldsen was an object of attraction to every stranger visiting Rome. Among many other persons of celebrity, Sir Walter Scott obtained an introduction to him. Although so well acquainted with the literature of the north of Europe, Scott could only converse in his own tongue. Thorwaldsen, on his side, had but a very slight knowledge of English, so that the meeting of the two celebrated men was somewhat peculiar. They saluted each other very heartily, but could only give vent to their feelings of pleasure in broken sentences and exclamations, such as "Conocenza—charme—plaisir—happy—acquaintance—piacere—delighted—heureux." The conversation was necessarily rather brief and scanty; but the two new friends were so pleased with each other, that they shook hands very heartily, and patted one another on the shoulder, and after they had parted, looked at each other as long as possible, nodding in the most familiar way. A simple, unaffected man himself, Thorwaldsen was delighted with all who were frank and open, and therefore felt himself attracted to Scott as soon as he saw him. He could not, on the other hand, fathom the remarkable character of Byron,

and found it quite impossible to understand his misanthropic melancholy.

In the year 1838, at the age of sixty-eight, Thorwaldsen returned to Denmark, not, as twenty years before, to pay a brief visit, but to end his days. The enthusiasm and homage of his countrymen was boundless. No sovereign ever received such touching and brilliant proofs of the love and reverence of his people. The artist was deeply moved. When, on the evening of his arrival in Copenhagen, he stood on the balcony of the academy, and saw the immense crowd below, which burst into shouts of joy at his appearance, he turned and said smilingly to his friend Thiele, "One would imagine that we were in Rome, and that I were the pope, standing in St. Peter's, and pronouncing the blessing 'urbi et orbi!'"

An interrupted succession of festivities so hindered the sculptor in his work, which he had not laid aside, that he found it necessary to retire for six months at a time to the estate of his patroness, the Baroness von Stampé, where, at her request, he executed his own statue, and the bust of Ehrenschlager, the Danish *littérateur*. His diligence and ability were still unimpaired. The only thing which marked the approach of age was the loss of his memory, which, in regard to invitations, led to many amusing mistakes. When the dinner hour arrived, he searched among the papers lying on his table, and took the first of four or five invitations which he found. He soon found it necessary to change a system which led him to give very frequent offence, and adopted the plan of giving all such matters into the charge of a very devoted and intelligent servant, named Wilkens. If he were invited anywhere, he invariably said, "I cannot promise to come; you must ask Wilkens, he will tell you if I am disengaged or not." As Wilkens always accompanied him to and from the houses which he visited, it frequently happened that he was ignorant of where he was going even when already on the way.

Although rather parsimonious, and often suffering from attacks of hypochondria, Thorwaldsen was nevertheless a man of a generous and amiable disposition. The King of Prussia on one occasion ordered a statue from him. "Your Majesty," answered the sculptor, "there is at present one of your Majesty's subjects in Rome more competent than I am to carry out the wishes with which you have deigned to honour me. May I be permitted to recommend him to your royal patronage?" The artist thus introduced to the king was Rudolph Schadow, who was then in very depressed circumstances. His beautiful work, "The Spinning Wheel," was the result of this considerate recommendation.

In the year 1841, Thorwaldsen travelled again through Germany and Switzerland to Rome. He was everywhere received with the highest marks of esteem and respect, and after a short stay in Rome, returned to Copenhagen, where he died of an apoplectic stroke, on the 24th of March, 1844.

Having no relations, he bequeathed his large and valuable collection of statuary and casts to the state, on the condition that a building should be erected for their preservation and exhibition, which was opened in 1846, and has called forth the admiration of all visitors to Copenhagen.

Our space forbids any enumeration of his works. Many of them were so much admired that it was necessary for him to repeat them frequently. His bas-relief of Achilles witnessing the departure of Briseis is worthy of comparison with the best specimens of the antique. The statues of Schiller in Stuttgart and of Gutenberg

in Mayence have been highly praised. His last work, at which he was engaged a few hours before his death, was a statue of Luther.

PEEPS THROUGH LOOPHOLES AT MEN, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS.

BY CUTHBERT BEDE.

"Tis pleasant, through the loopholes of retreat,
To peep at such a world; to see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd."

COWPER.

NO. XII.—CHRISTMAS HERALDS.

IT was on a Monday morning, in the last week of November, in the year 1787, that an elderly man of plain, decent appearance, came to the house called Weston Lodge, in the pleasant village of Weston-Underwood, in Buckinghamshire. The lodge was situated close by the road-side, and had been the vicarage house; and, though its present occupant was not a parson, he had done more parson's work than had been accomplished by most men who have not been admitted to holy orders; for he was William Cowper, the poet. A twelvemonth since he had come to that spot from the adjacent village of Olney, where he had lived for twenty years, and where, among many other religious productions, he had written those hymns which have been a comfort and consolation to Christians throughout the world.

Cowper lived there with his dear old friend, Mrs. Unwin,* with whom he had removed from Olney. His fifty-fifth birthday, on November 26, 1786, found him safely housed there, hardly attending to the dark, thick fog that hung around the house on account of the neatness and cosy comfort that reigned within doors. It was one of those days that were the heralds of Christmas, from which the poet of "The Task" knew how to extract so much that was pleasant and profitable; and, whether the days were wet or dry, the house was warm and comfortable.

"There is a man in the kitchen, sir, who desires to speak with you," said the person who acted as butler, footman, and gardener to the two inhabitants of Weston Lodge.

"What sort of a man is he, Sam?" asked his master.

* In the very interesting "Life of John Newton," by the Rev. Josiah Bull, grandson of Cowper's friend, the biographer settles conclusively the often mooted question of the poet's engagement to Mrs. Unwin. Mr. Bull quotes the following passage from Southey, and proves its error by an extract from "Newton's Diary," hitherto unpublished:—"Another cause, however, has been assigned for the return of Mr. Cowper's malady. It has been said that he proposed marriage to Mrs. Unwin; that the proposal was accepted and the time fixed; that prudential considerations were then thought to preponderate against it; and that his mind was overthrown by the anxieties consequent upon such an engagement. This I believe to be utterly unfounded; for that no such engagement was either known or suspected by Mr. Newton I am enabled to assert; and who can suppose that it would have been concealed from him?" This is unquestionably a mistake, although thus strongly put. Nothing, it is obvious, was more natural or becoming than a marriage between two persons thus providentially brought to reside with each other. Nor was there, as is perhaps generally supposed, any great disparity of years between Mr. Cowper and Mrs. Unwin. Now the editor of this volume is able to state that he has again and again heard his father say that Mr. Cowper and Mrs. Unwin were betrothed, and about to be married, when the melancholy return of Mr. Cowper's malady in 1773 prevented the accomplishment of their purpose; and, moreover, that it was Mrs. Unwin herself who made this statement to his grandfather. But what Mr. Newton has said in his unfinished sketch is even still more to the purpose, and must for ever settle this question. We copy from the original before us: "They were congenial spirits, united in the faith and hope of the gospel, and their intimate and growing friendship led them in the course of four or five years to an engagement for marriage, which was well known to me, and to most of their and my friends, and was to have taken place in a few months, but was prevented by the terrible malady which seized him about that time."

"A plain, decent, elderly man, sir, who gives his name as Cox, and says that he has trudged hither all the way from Northampton, desirous to speak with you."

"It must be a pressing matter that thus makes him undertake a walk of some fifteen miles. Show him in, Sam." And Sam presently returned, ushering the decent, elderly man into Cowper's study, which was also the dining-room.

"Pray be seated, sir," said Cowper, with his customary polite and gentle manner; "and let me know for what cause I am indebted for the honour of this visit, paid at the task of so long a walk."

"Sir," said the visitor, taking a seat, and clearing his throat, as though he were in his clerk's desk and about to commence his official duties—"sir, my name is Cox. I am clerk of the parish of All Saints, in Northampton; brother of Mr. Cox, the upholsterer. It is customary for the person in my office to annex to a bill of mortality, which he publishes at Christmas, a copy of verses. You will do me a great favour, sir, if you will supply me with one."

To this, Cowper replied, "Mr. Cox, you have several men of genius in your town; why have you not applied to some of them? There is a namesake of yours in particular, Cox the statuary, who, everybody knows, is a first-rate maker of verses. He, surely, is the man of all the world for your purpose."

"Alas, sir!" replied the Northampton parish clerk, "I have heretofore borrowed help from him; but he is a gentleman of so much reading that the people of our town cannot understand him."

Cowper could not but feel all the force of the compliment implied in this speech, and was almost ready to answer, "My good friend, they may find me unintelligible for the same reason." But, on asking him whether he had walked over to Weston on purpose to implore the assistance of his muse, and on the clerk's assuring him that he had done so, Cowper, as he afterwards testified to his cousin, Lady Hesketh, felt his mortified vanity a little consoled; and, pitying the poor man's distress, which appeared to be considerable, promised to supply him with what he wanted; and Mr. Cox took his leave, with many protestations of gratitude, and was shown out through the kitchen by Sam.

Cowper was not one to forget a promise, especially when it was to give gratuitous help to an inferior in rank and station. He soon wrote nine verses, one of which has made its mark and been often quoted:—

"Like crowded forest-trees we stand
And some are mark'd to fall;
The axe will smite at God's command,
And soon shall smite us all."

And though he headed his verses with a quotation from a Latin author—perhaps to show that he also was a gentleman of much reading, like Mr. Cox the statuary—yet he wound up his stanzas with lines that could be as easily understood by the people of Northampton as any preceding ones in his poem. They were these, and were presumed to be written by the brother of Mr. Cox the upholsterer:—

"So prays your clerk with all his heart,
And, ere he quits his pen,
Begs you for once to take his part
And answer all—Amen!"

This poem was sent off to Northampton by the waggon, which, as Cowper said, was "loaded in part with my effusions in the mortuary style." And he gaily exclaimed, "A fig for poets who write epitaphs upon individuals! I have written one that serves *two hundred* persons." He wrote five more of these poems to

accompany Mr. Cox's "bills of mortality" for the ensuing years, up to 1793; but in the following year, 1794, the breaking down of his own health prevented him from continuing his accustomed kindness to the parish clerk of All Saints.

Those "bills of mortality," with their copies of verses, were, at that time, among the looked-for heralds of Christmas; and others than parish-clerks were wont to announce the season by a distribution of "A Copy of Christmas Verses," presented to those inhabitants of the town from whom they anticipated the present of a Christmas-box. Postmen and dustmen have done this up to a very recent date; and the watchmen were strenuous upholders of the custom. One of their pieces, of the date 1823, concluded with the following lines:—

"To brighter scenes we now direct our view;
And first, fair ladies, let us turn to you.
May each New Year new joys, new pleasures bring,
And life for you be one delightful spring!
No summer's sun annoy with fev'rish rays,
No winter chill the evening of your days.
To you, kind sirs, we next our tribute pay:
May smiles and sunshine greet you on your way!
If married, calm and peaceful be your lives;
If single, may you forthwith get you wives!
Thus, whether male or female, old or young,
Or wed or single, be this burden sung:
Long may you live to hear, and we to call,
A happy Christmas and New Year to all!"

The heralds of Christmas are very numerous, and appear in very different shapes. We have only to glance down the advertising columns of the newspapers, any time after Advent has begun, to see in those manifold announcements of creature comforts, luxuries, and redundancies with which our nation of shopkeepers usher in the festive season, what are considered by them and their customers to be the heralds of Christmas. One advertiser is disposed to think that a guinea hamper of cheap wines will be found an acceptable herald; another changes the hamper of wine to a chest of tea; another to a load of coals; another to a box of toys for a Christmas-tree; another to a case of oranges, and raisins, and dried fruit, with "sugar and spice and all that's nice." Then there are the signs of preparation at the poulters' and butchers', at the grocers' and fish-mongers'; and the key-note sounded for the Christmas cheer by the Smithfield Club Cattle-show. There are also the "breakings-up" of school, and the beginning of the holidays, the sure and pleasant heralds of Christmas to all the "happy families" throughout the land. And there are also the waits, whose early minstrelsy is heard a week or two in advance of Christmas. But it is not of these Christmas heralds that I would speak, but of one or two lesser-known varieties, only to be met with in such sequestered country villages as our Minima Parva.

Yet, as I have just mentioned the waits, I will make an exception for an exceptional character, and briefly speak of one herald of Christmas, whose musical perambulations as "a wait" were confined to a manufacturing town. He has been dead now some sixteen years; but I well remember him through many years, and from an early age. I have forgotten his surname, but he always went by the name of "Blind William," for he was quite blind. Yet, notwithstanding that "total eclipse" of his vision, he would daily leave his home at Kidderminster, make his way unattended through two streets, turn up to the parish church (Richard Baxter's church), unlock the gates of the churchyard and tower, and climb the staircase to the belfry, where he rang the five o'clock morning bell, and then would return home, to revisit the church in the

evening, in order to ring the eight o'clock curfew bell. This bell on a certain night in the year was prolonged for one hour, a sum of money having been left for that purpose as a thank-offering to God, by a person who, on his way home from Bridgenorth fair, would have fallen over a rock, had not the sound of the Kidderminster curfew warned him to retrace his steps. Many times have I seen Blind William, with upturned sightless gaze and smiling face, steadily pursuing his solitary walk to and from his daily occupation. It was his sole business, except at Christmas; and he was the first herald of the season. Like many others similarly afflicted, he had an extraordinary ear and taste for music, and could quickly reproduce on his violin any tune that he had heard. On the midnight after Advent Sunday he began his annual task as a Christmas herald, by going through the streets, playing upon his violin a hymn tune, at the end of which he said, "I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year," and then passed on to another street. This he continued nightly through the Advent weeks, and, in the Christmas week, came round for his well-earned Christmas-box. The female relative who kept house for him accompanied him on these visits, and on his nightly rounds as a Christmas "wait"; and often, as a boy, have I lain awake listening to Blind William's violin performance, and his cheery salutation. In the winter season he always carried a lantern when he went to and from the church; this was in order to prevent careless people, who were blessed with sight, from running against him. Blind William was the earliest herald of Christmas known to me in my youthful days.

But I would speak now of some heralds of Christmas to be met with in those thousands of sequestered villages and hamlets—like our Minima Parva—that are scattered broadcast over the fair soil of England. There are our mistletoe-gatherers; for that parasite grows so freely in this parish—in our orchards and on the American poplars and other trees in our hedgerows—that it becomes an important article of commerce; quite as much so as is our watercress, of which we send many tons' weight up to the London markets. We also send mistletoe and holly to the "great Babel"; and I dare say that we contributed our share to those remarkable statistics so elaborately made by Mr. Henry Mayhew, in 1851. He reckoned that there were, at that time, nearly 250,000 "branches" of holly sold by costermongers, for £738. The choicely-berried sprays for the crowning glory of the plum-pudding were valued at £200. The fear then expressed by a gardener as to a "No Popery" cry depreciating the demand for holly, may possibly affect its sale this present Christmas. "Why," he said, "properly to 'Christmas' St. Paul's would take £50 at least, or nearer £100. I hope there'll be no 'No Popery' nonsense against Christmasing this year. I'm always sorry when anything of that kind's afloat, because it's frequently a hindrance to business." Mr. Mayhew reckoned the London sale of mistletotoe at £702. It was double the price of holly, which was often made to do duty for "the kissing-bush"; and half-a-crown was a not uncommon price for a handsome mistletoe bough. The greater portion of the "Christmas" is bought by the costers in the market to retail in the streets and suburbs of the metropolis; and their stock has to be laid in at least a fortnight before Christmas. Consequently it happens that here, in Minima Parva, as in other places, the holly and mistletoe is gathered when December has not half completed its days. Our "merry men" cannot afford, as did those in Sir Walter Scott's poem, to wait till Christmas-eve before they go to the

wood "to gather in the mistletoe"; for, when that evening comes, the mystic bough will have passed through many hands, and have travelled many miles. Its gathering gives profitable employment to many of our rural population, both young and old; and when I see two cottage lads pass up the lane with a stick over their shoulders, from which hang boughs of mistletoe and branches of berried holly, although they somewhat remind me of the pictures of Israelitish spies with the grapes of the Promised Land, yet I know them to be the heralds of Christmas, and therefore the harbingers of the season of glad tidings.

We have another Christmas herald in the shape of the country carol-seller, whose vocation begins with December. To our rural population he is just as much a harbinger of Christmas-tide as the may-bloom is of spring or the swallow of summer. The poet Gay said that the townspeople could "judge the festival of Christmas near" by rosemary and bays being "bawled in frequent cries through all the town"; and the country folks are reminded of the oncoming of the festal time by carols being bawled through the village streets. For the modern Autolycus who, in December, takes up the trade of a carol-seller, not only offers his wares for sale unto those who, like Mopsa, the shepherdess, dearly "love a ballad in print," but can also "bear his part" in singing it; "'tis his occupation" so to do; and, like Autolycus, he often sets his carol "to a very doleful tune." Nevertheless it is music to the rustic ear; and the carol-seller is doubly welcome because he is also a carol-singer.

The country carol-seller despairs to offer novelties of song. He knows his customers, and is aware that they will give the preference to verses, the rudeness of whose jingles and the roughness of whose metre are all smoothed and mellowed to them by time and long familiar usage. And so he gives them their choice between such carols as "God rest you, merry gentlemen," "Behold the grace appears," "I saw three ships come sailing by," "Now thrice welcome Christmas, that brings us good cheer," "When Christ was born of Mary free," "Lullaby, my baby, what meanest thou to cry," "A glorious star from heaven appeared," "On Christmas night all Christians sing," or, of more recent origin, "While shepherds watched their flocks by night," "High let us swell our tuneful notes," and "Hark, the herald angels sing." All these are sealed either with the stamp of antiquity or of public approval, at any rate in rural districts; and the country carol-seller selects his wares judiciously, and confidently offers to the rustic ploughman the Christmas carol that he would not place before a town mechanic. The cuts also must be old-fashioned. Hone once advised a printer to get some new designs, and the answer was, that the people wouldn't think the carols genuine if the pictures were modern. So we leave him singing to his small audience of village children—

"The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind;
They left their flocks a-feeding,
In tempest, storm, and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway,
The heavenly Babe to find."
* * * * *

The end of the year has now brought my monthly essays to a close, and I have thought that I could not more appropriately conclude them than by taking my last "Peep through Loopholes" at those Christmas heralds who proclaim the approach of the glad season that brought Peace on Earth, Good-will to Man.

TRIPLE RAINBOWS.

To the Editor of the LEISURE HOUR.

SIR,—I enclose a copy of a very short paper by Bishop Mant, descriptive of the phenomenon of triple rainbows, described and illustrated in No. 826 of the LEISURE HOUR, my reason being that it supplies the explanation "left open for the consideration of meteorologists."

The bishop's paper is accompanied by a coloured engraving of the three bows, their position being very similar to that you have reproduced from the "Encyclopaedia Metropolitana," as seen by Dr. Halley at Chester. It is worthy of notice that the point on which the bishop evidently felt doubt, namely, that the relative position of the three bows remained unchanged, had on the previous occasion been noted by Halley, thus supplying the missing link in the verification of the bishop's explanation. Your readers will notice that there is the requisite water surface in each case. "In the North Seas" there would probably be more or less, "at Belfast" there is the Lough, "at Chester" the estuary of the Dee, and lastly, "amid the isles of Greece" there could be no scarcity of water, and the mirror was evidently good, as "the yacht was becalmed and perfectly steady." From all the evidence there cannot be a doubt that the extraordinary bow described by your correspondent, was occasioned by an image of the sun reflected from the surface of water. I may add that Dr. Scoresby (in "Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal," vol. II. p. 235) described some appearances of this kind, observed in the North Seas, but these were much more imperfect than that described by Bishop Mant.

G. J. SYMONS.

From the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, Vol. XV., 1828. A PHENOMENON OF THE RAINBOW, OBSERVED BY R. MANT, D.D., M.R.I.A., LORD BISHOP OF DOWN AND CONNOR, NOV. 14TH, 1826.

"This phenomenon was observed at the See House, near Belfast, between 3 and 4 p.m. on Tuesday, November 14, 1826. It remained till the setting of the sun. The colours of each bow were brilliant, but the centre one was the least so. It is not known how long it was visible, but it must have been at least ten minutes. This phenomenon appears to afford an interesting illustration of the theory of the rainbow. *

"It cannot be doubted that the extraordinary, or centre bow, was occasioned by an image of the sun reflected from the surface of water (probably the Lough of Belfast). The description and figure answer exactly to this explanation. The inner and centre bow have their colours in the same order. They both appear to spring from the same points of the horizon, as they ought; because the sum of the heights of the two bows must be equal to twice the angle of the primary bow. The centre bow appears to mix itself with the exterior, or secondary bow. This circumstance enables us to point out with tolerable exactness when the observation, as represented in the drawing, was made. The interval between the primary and secondary bow being somewhat above 8° , the sun's altitude must have been about 4° . Now, on November 14, in lat. $54^{\circ} 36'$, this took place about thirty-five minutes past three o'clock. It is said it lasted at least ten minutes and till sunset. Probably what was supposed to be the setting of the sun was occasioned by its disappearing behind a low cloud. As the phenomenon does not appear to have been observed more than ten minutes, no material alteration would have taken place in the relative positions of the two primary bows."

Varieties.

TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER.—In our climate the weather is the threshold of conversation—the stepping-stone to chat—a proffered ticket of civility between strangers—a no-man's land that is every man's land—a debatable district, where we may meet and join forces. To tell a person that it is wet to-day and that it was fine yesterday, may neither add to his stock of knowledge, nor denote yourself to be a man of original ideas and pithy sayings; yet it is a valuable method, whereby we bridge over the little gulf of diffidence or difficulty that may lie between us and the commencement of a conversation. The observations in themselves may be shallow and obvious, but they are far from worthless, inasmuch as they show a desire that the speaker wished to be civil to the person whom he addresses, and that he does not care to shut himself up in reserve, like a social hedgehog in his bristles. Such weather remarks are to be accepted as the raising of the hat—the initial of politeness—the signal for the ball of conversation to be set rolling. Ordinarily, we know quite as much about the weather as can be told us; for, besides consulting-glasses, barometers, weather-cocks, and Darby and Joans, we may possibly possess sundry bodily barometers in the unpleasant shape of corns, rheumatism, or neuralgia, from which we get those twitches, shoots, jerks, and aches which foretell and accompany atmospheric changes. Yet we must talk about the weather, and compare notes thereupon with our neighbours. What would be the half-hour before a dinner-party without the weather's aid in introducing guest to guest, as though it were another Bean Nash bringing strangers together, and setting folks at their ease at a Bath assembly? It opens out so many subjects—as to the crops or the flower garden, or to drives and walks, or to croquet and hunting, and a hundred other things. The weather is the open-sesame key with which we unlock a little barrier, and, having passed it, we may wander at our own sweet will—who can say where?—*Cuthbert Bede.*

SYDNEY SMITH'S DESCRIPTION OF MRS. FRY.—There is a spectacle which this town exhibits that I will venture to call the most solemn, the most Christian, the most affecting, which any human being ever witnessed. To see that holy woman in the midst of the wretched prisoners, to see them all calling earnestly upon God, soothed by her voice, animated by her look, clinging to the hem of her garment, and worshipping her as the only being who has ever loved or taught them, or spoken to them of God—this is the sight which breaks down the pageant of the world, which tells us that the short hour of life is passing away, and that we must prepare to meet God, that it is time to give, to pray, to comfort, to go like this blessed woman and do the work of her heavenly Saviour, Jesus, among the guilty, among the broken-hearted and the sick, and to labour in the deepest and darkest wretchedness of life.

THE MORGUE IN PARIS.—It is not generally known that the name Morgue is derived from the second wicket, or inner gate, of the Châtelet prison, which was called La Morgue, and where newly-arrived prisoners were detained for a few minutes, in order that the warders might obtain a good view of them (*les morguer à leur aise*), for the purpose of identification. Subsequently, all dead and unclaimed bodies found in the streets of Paris, or in the Seine, were brought to this prison gate, and this custom continued until 1804, when a special building called the Morgue was erected. The establishment of the present recently-erected Morgue on the point of the island behind Notre Dame consists of a superintendent, a clerk, and three assistants. The first receives £84 per annum, the four latter £48 each—small pay, it must be admitted, for the revolving and hard work they have to perform. The superintendent is a very remarkable man, possessing as keen a desire to identify a dead body as the “blind man” at the General Post Office has for deciphering very illegible addresses on letters. The slightest mark on the body or clothes of the deceased, which would remain unnoticed by a casual observer, serves as a clue to him, by which means communications are made to the relatives or friends of the deceased. Great exactitude prevails in the organisation of the establishment. A *procès-verbal*, containing no less than twenty particulars relative to the sex, age, manner of death, etc., of the deceased, is drawn up by the superintendent, and should this means and the exposure of the body for three days fail in leading to its identification, it is buried at the expense of the city, the establishment of the Morgue receiving 6f. 50c. for each burial. The most striking and melancholy fact connected with the Morgue is, that the

number of dead bodies brought within its walls has been increasing during latter years in a frightful ratio, and out of all proportion to the increase of the population. Thus, in 1846, the number was 302; in 1856, 475; in 1866, 733; and in the first nine months of the present year, 697. Of the 733 bodies deposited in the Morgue in 1866, 486 were men, 86 women, and 161 infants. Of 445 who were identified, 285 committed suicide by drowning, 19 were homicides, 36 hanged themselves, 5 committed suicide by firearms, 3 by knives, 6 by charcoal, 6 by poison, 3 died from starvation, and 82 from sudden death in the streets. The greatest number of bodies are brought to the Morgue in June and July, the fewest in December and January. Gambling on the Stock Exchange is stated to be the most fruitful cause of suicide; the great facility that exists in the Paris Bourse for such gambling tempts thousands of persons to participate in it. The number of infants brought to the Morgue tallies with unvarying regularity with the time of the Carnival. Nine months after that season of debauchery the Morgue invariably receives a greater number of unfortunate infants than at any other time of the year. For everybody brought to the Morgue the establishment pays fifteen francs.

ANECDOTE OF LORD ELDON.—The Chancellor was sitting in his study over a table of papers, when a young and lovely girl, somewhat rustic in her attire, slightly embarrassed by the novelty of her position, but thoroughly in command of her wits, entered the room, and walked up to the lawyer's chair. “My dear,” said the Chancellor, rising and bowing with the old-world courtesy, “who are you?” “Lord Eldon,” answered the blushing maiden, “I am Bessie Bridge, of Weobly, the daughter of the Vicar of Weobly, and papa has sent me to remind you of a promise which you made him when I was a little baby, and you were a guest in his house on the occasion of your first election as Member of Parliament for Weobly. “A promise, my dear young lady?” interposed the Chancellor, trying to recall how he had pledged himself. “Yes, Lord Eldon, a promise. You were standing over my cradle when papa said to you, ‘Mr. Scott, promise me that, if ever you are Lord Chancellor, when my little girl is a poor clergyman's wife you will give her husband a living;’ and you answered, ‘Mr. Bridge, my promise is not worth half-a-crown, but I give it to you, wishing it were worth more!’” Enthusiastically the Chancellor exclaimed, “You are quite right; I admit the obligation; I remember all about it;” and then, after a pause, archly surveying the damsel, whose graces were the reverse of matronly, he added, “But surely the time for making good my promise has not yet arrived? You cannot be any one's wife at present?” For a few seconds Bessie hesitated for an answer; and then with a blush, and a ripple of silver laughter, she replied, “No, but I do so wish to be somebody's wife! I am engaged to a young clergyman, and there is a living in Herefordshire, near my old home, that has recently fallen vacant, and if you give it to Alfred, why then, Lord Eldon, we shall be married before the end of the year.” Is there need to say that the Chancellor forthwith summoned his secretary, that the secretary forthwith made out the presentation to Bessie's lover, and that, having given the Chancellor a warm expression of her gratitude, Bessie made good speed back to Herefordshire, hugging the precious document the whole way home?

BETHELL'S INVENTIONS AND PATENTS.—In Mr. Timbs' last “Year Book of Facts,” there is an interesting notice of the late John Bethell, brother of Lord Westbury, the ex-Chancellor. Having spent some years in legal practice as a London solicitor, Mr. John Bethell turned his attention to chemistry and mechanical pursuits, producing numerous important inventions, and, with better fortune than usually befalls inventors, deriving substantial profit as well as distinction from some of his many patents and commercial operations. “In 1838 Mr. Bethell introduced the process by which he is most generally known, viz., the preserving timber from decay and the attack of insects and worms by impregnating it with oil of tar, commonly called creosote oil”—a process that was immediately adopted by Brunel and the younger Stephenson. Of the engineer's other more notable achievements, Mr. Timbs observes:—“In 1840 Mr. Bethell took out a patent for treating inferior animal and vegetable salts, by depositing the mucilaginous and gelatinous matter from them, and mixing them, or distilling them over, with light hydrocarbons, to obtain good lamp oils. In a patent taken out by him in 1848, a very ingenious mode of drying grain upon a system of endless cloths on revolving rollers is

described; also a method of preserving meat by injecting into the arteries of a newly-killed beast pyrolygneous acid, and afterwards common brine; also a very excellent mode of preserving milk or acid wines by impregnating them with carbonic acid gas. In 1853 he patented a new method of preserving wood by injecting it with a solution of metallic salt, heating it in a stove to drive off the water of the salt solution, and then plunging it in oil. In the same year he patented an improved method of wetting flax by the aid of warm water. In 1854 he patented a method of making coke from non-cooking coal, by previously mixing it with twenty to twenty-five per cent. of coal-tar pitch. In 1855 he patented a method of preserving meat, vegetables, and fruits, by drying out the water contained in them, at a temperature lower than that required for the coagulation of albumen. Meat and vegetables preserved by him in this manner were supplied to our troops in the Crimea. In 1857 he took out a provisional specification for a method of building composite ships of T-iron and wooden planks. In the same year he patented a steam-plough, consisting of a rotary digger or excavator combined with a traction engine. In 1858 he patented a method of separating iron pyrites from coal, the former to be used in the making of vitriol. . . . Mr. Bethell also bestowed much labour upon a plan for concentrating all the London gasworks at a site some miles down the river. He carried on for some time a distillery of beet-root spirit in Berkshire; and endeavoured for years to obtain the removal of the Customs regulations, which practically forbid the introduction of profitable beet-sugar and spirit industries into this country. He also effected considerable improvements in the extraction of copper from ores of low percentage. He left to his widow and sons the management of many important creosoting and chemical works in England and abroad."

SIR ROBERT PEEL'S GERMAN SYMPATHIES.—"Whitchall, October 10, 1841.—My dear Mr. Bunsen,—My note merely conveyed a request that you would be good enough to meet Mr. Cornelius at dinner on Friday last. I assure you that I have been amply repaid for any attention I may have shown to that distinguished artist, in the personal satisfaction I have had in the opportunity of making his acquaintance. He is one of a noble people distinguished in every art of war and peace. The union and patriotism of that people, spread over the centre of Europe, will contribute the surest guarantee for the peace of the world, and the most powerful check upon the spread of all pernicious doctrines injurious to the cause of religion and order, and that liberty which respects the rights of others. My earnest hope is that every member of this illustrious race, while he may cherish the particular country of his birth as he does his home, will extend his devotion beyond its narrow limits, and exult in the name of a German, and recognise the claim of Germany to the love and affection and patriotic exertions of all her sons. I hope I judge the feelings of every German by those which were excited in my own breast (in the breast of a foreigner and a stranger) by a simple ballad, that seemed, however, to concentrate the will of a mighty people, and said emphatically,

"They shall not have the Rhine."

They will not have it—and the Rhine will be protected by a song, if the sentiments which that song embodies pervade, as I hope and trust they do, every German heart. You will begin to think that I am a good German myself—and so I am, if hearty wishes for the union and welfare of the German race can constitute one. Most faithfully yours, ROBERT PEEL."

WILLIAM PENN AND HIS FATHER, ADMIRAL PENN.—The Admiral said, "He might *thee* or *thou* who he pleased, except the King, the Duke of York, and himself; these he should not *thee* or *thou*." But still William would not give his father to expect that he could in conscience make any such exceptions. On parting from him for the night, the Admiral, with evidence of much displeasure, told his son to be ready to go out with him in the coach next morning when called on. William could sleep none that night, his mind being disturbed by a suspicion that his father had determined to take him to Court at once, to see how far courtly surroundings would aid in driving away his Quaker prepossessions. "When the morning came they went in the coach together, without William knowing where they were going, till the coachman was ordered to drive into the Park. Thus he found his father's intent was to have private discourse with him. He commenced by asking him what he could think of himself, after being trained up in learning and courtly accomplishments, nothing being spared to fit him to take the position of an ambassador at foreign courts, or that of a minister at home, that he should now become a Quaker. William told him that it was in obedience to the

manifestation of God's will in his conscience, but that it was a cross to his own nature. He also reminded him of that former meeting in Cork; and told him that he believed he was himself at that time convinced of the truth of the doctrine of the Quakers, only that the grandeur of the world had been felt to be too great a sacrifice to give up. After more discourse they turned homewards. They stopped at a tavern on the way, where Sir William ordered a glass of wine." On entering a room on this pretext, he immediately locked the door. Father and son were now face to face, under the influence of stern displeasure on the one hand, and, on the other, prayerful feeling to God for strength rightly to withstand or bear what was coming. William, remembering his early experience on returning from Oxford, expected something desperate. The thought arose that the Admiral was going to cane him; but, instead of that, the father, looking earnestly at him, and laying his hands down on the table, solemnly told him he was going to kneel down to pray to Almighty God that his son might not be a Quaker, and that he might never again go to a Quaker meeting. William, opening the casement, declared that, before he would listen to his father's putting up such a prayer to God, he would leap out of the window. At that time a nobleman was passing the tavern in his coach, and, observing Sir William's at the door, he alighted. Being directed to the room in which father and son were together, his knock came in time to arrest the catastrophe. He had evidently heard of William's return, and of the Admiral's high displeasure. After saluting the former, the MS. says that "he turned to the father, and told him he might think himself happy in having a son who could despise the grandeur of the world, and refrain from the vices which so many were running into."—*The Penns*, by Maria Webb (F. B. Kitto, London).

WELLINGTON'S CRITICISM ON NAPOLEON IN RUSSIA.—"The habit of Napoleon had been to astonish and deceive the world, and he had come at last to deceive himself. When the future prospects of the army were discussed it appears that he never contemplated a retrograde movement to a greater extent than Smolensk. At times he looked to pass the winter in the southern provinces of the Russian empire, about Kalougha, and it appears that he could not bring his mind so far to consider the truth as to calculate the relative strength of the armies opposed to each other upon his flanks, and to ascertain whether it was such as to enable him ever to retreat from Russia. . . . It is astonishing that Napoleon did not attack his adversary previous to the commencement of his retreat, and endeavour to remove him to a greater distance, and especially from the roads from Kalougha to Smolensk. . . He should have rendered his army as light as possible, and should have destroyed all superfluous baggage. . . . He should then have marched by two or three separate roads. By these modes he might have saved his army, at least from any military disaster; and time, of the greatest importance to him, would have been saved. . . . He marched in one column, which extended the distance of two or three marches."—*Wellington Despatches (new series)*.

VULTURES.—At first not a bird has been seen in sight, as I have laid on my back and gazed into the spotless blue sky; but hardly has the skin been half withdrawn than specks have appeared in the heavens, rapidly increasing. "Caw, caw," has been heard several times from the neighbouring bushes; the buzzards have swept down close to my people, and have snatched a morsel of clotted blood from the ground. The specks have increased to winged creatures, at the great height resembling flies, when presently a rushing wind behind me, like a whirlwind, has been followed by the pounce of a red-faced vulture that has fallen from the heavens in haste with closed wings to the bloody feast, followed quickly by many of his brethren. The sky has become alive with black specks in the far-distant blue, with wings hurrying from all quarters. At length a coronet of steady, soaring vultures forms a wide circle from above as they hesitate to descend, but continue to revolve around the object of attraction. The great bare-necked vulture suddenly appears. The animal has been skinned, and the required flesh secured by the men; we withdraw a hundred paces from the scene. A general rush and descent takes place; hundreds of hungry beaks are tearing at the offal. The great bare-necked vulture claims respect among the crowd; but another form has appeared in the blue sky, and rapidly descends. A pair of long ungainly legs, hanging down beneath enormous wings, now touch the ground, and Abou Seen (father of the teeth or beak, the Arab name for the Marabout), has arrived, and he stalks proudly towards the crowds, picking his way with his long bill through the struggling vultures, and swallowing the lion's share of the repast.—Sir Samuel Baker.

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